

LEADS MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—The annual festival of this institution was held on Friday last in the Stock Exchange; Lord Mahon in the chair. His lordship made a fluent and interesting speech. In course of it he with truth said, that if it be true that knowledge is power, it is not less true that knowledge is pleasure,—pleasure with no bounds or limits on this earth. The boundlessness of knowledge his lordship aptly illustrated by the discoveries of the telescope, on the one hand, and the microscope, on the other. Our discoveries seem only limited in depth, if not in breadth, by the imperfection of the instruments we yet use; the extreme limit is probably almost as far removed as ever. But depend on it, he said, that pleasure is not to be found in mere superficial acquirements. Yet of this I am persuaded, that there was great truth in the remark I once heard from that accomplished and experienced man Prince Talleyrand:—"Depend on it there is no such thing as labour lost. Depend on it, whatever branch of study you pursue, and however recalcitrant or remote its utility may seem, a time may come, and when you least expect it, that you will derive practical advantage from it, and see the good effects of having turned your minds to it." His Lordship's speech was followed by the proposal and adoption of various resolutions in favour of the objects of such institutions, and among which was one by Mr. R. M. Milnes, M.P., to the effect, that "To impart a taste for artistic beauty, and to give familiarity with the principles on which it rests, should be one of the objects of popular education." Mr. Roebuck wound up the eloquence already expended with no less eloquence of his own. "All the great advances of knowledge," he remarked, in one part of his speech, "have not been done by the leisure class, but by the labouring, working for their livelihood, and bringing habits of industry to the acquirement of knowledge; using those stern habits in the race with the *dilettanti*, pressing upon and outstripping him, because the latter is as dilatory in his modes of pursuing knowledge as in his habits of pleasure. . . . An institution like this makes us all entertain right notions of true equality; it teaches us to have those sympathies which nature intended, and which you have always felt vehemently; it makes us all understand each other as true men; it is the bond of knowledge—the tie which shall unite us to each other. . . . As this is a mechanics' institution, I hope that it will be the means of doing what it does not at present—of bringing the artisan amongst us, and introducing a close alliance between all classes of society, without which there is no safety; and that we shall be with them in the brotherhood of knowledge and of feeling, and make this what it now calls itself, but which, I fear, it has not been—a mechanics' institute."

PUBLIC SLAUGHTER-HOUSES.—Mr. R. B. Grantham, whose work on the *Abattoirs* of France we noticed some time ago, has published a proposition for establishing public slaughter-houses in the principal towns of England. He submits that the butchers, and those interested in the connected trades, should unite, and erect, under an Act of Parliament, suitable buildings, with land sufficient for layage and pasture, in a locality approved of by the local authorities. "They ought to be the undertakers," he says, "as most interested in the matter, and should take the lead, for they may depend upon it that the time is not far distant when these arrangements, or something very like them, will be carried out, and they will have to submit to the control of other persons, instead of keeping it in their own hands."

RAILWAY RATING.—In an appeal before the magistrates at Manchester against an assessment of about a mile of the South Junction line, belonging to the London and North-Western Company, it was stated for the respondents, that value of land prior to building on it was 62,787l., and rateable value 2,960l.; present value of whole, 300,000l. The company proved the receipts for August and September last to have been 264l. 11s. 2d., and the working expenses 251l. 9s. 6d., leaving a profit of 13l. 1s. 8d., being at the rate of 78l. 10s. per annum. The magistrates, however, confirmed the rate. The appellants intimated an appeal to quarter sessions.

SHEFFIELD ATHENÆUM AND MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.—To the formal opening of this combined institution the Earl of Carlisle, Mr. Roebuck, M.P., and other celebrities, gave their countenance, those named personally, and others, such as Lord Mahon, by letter. The chairman, Mr. Alderman Dunn, explained the objects of the new establishment, which comprehends a news-room, coffee-room, and library, class-rooms, and hall for lectures, &c. The whole cost of the building, including site, has been 6,500l., part of it not yet raised. The first stone was laid about two years since by Lord Arundel and Surrey. The Athenæum department was opened in the beginning of the present year, and the institution class-rooms on 1st October last. The pupils are now taught reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, and geography, and other classes are to be opened. In speaking of the purposes of such an establishment, and while deprecating the idea that duty alone, apart from the memories of 'auld lang syne,' as in the present instance, should lead him to run about and foist his presence wherever there is a mechanics' institution or an Athenæum to be founded, Lord Carlisle remarked, with a quiet apology for what might be regarded as smelling a little of his shop—the Board of Health—that "it is not from the languid bed of sickness, from the troubled couch of fever, from the gloomy chambers of death that we can expect to derive hopeful votaries of intellectual and mental progress. The vigorous exercise of the judgment, the buoyant play of the fancy, the elastic impulses of the soul, require healthy and undiseased organs for their full display and development. The mind and body will almost in every case—though there are brilliant exceptions—be found to react upon each other, and those who promote the enlightened care of the physical health will most truly advance the use and enjoyment of the rational and moral faculties. The undrained alley, the unventilated room, the impure atmosphere, will but serve to irritate the tempers for which we trust here to provide serene enjoyment, and to clog and debase the energies for which we shall endeavour here to furnish fit opportunity and congenial nurture."

SOCIETY OF ARTS.—At the opening meeting, 7th November, Mr. W. Tooke, F.R.S., Vice-President, in the chair, Mr. Digby Wyatt read a voluminous report upon the Eleventh French Exposition, which has been published for public use. The report commenced by allusion to the attention paid by the French government to the development of the manufactures of that country by precept, example, public exhibition, &c., to the traditional excellence of early French productions, and to the modern restoration of that supereminence by the means before-mentioned, now persevered in with few interruptions for fifty years. Mr. Wyatt then gave a minute description of the building erected for the exhibition in 1849, which was situated on the Carré de Marigny, on the Champs Elysées. The estimated cost of the building was, in

	Total area.	Available area.
1839 about £14,151	11,308	5,800
1844 " 13,056	10,497	9,451
1849 " 16,000	22,201	9,734

To the cost of this year must be added 2,000l. for the agricultural shed;—making the whole estimate about 18,000l. The cost of the building per square foot was, in

1839.....	2s. 2d.
1844.....	1s. 3½d.
1849.....	1s. 2½d.

The building had the defect of containing no one great hall, whereas on the occasion of distributing the prizes a great assemblage might take place. The writer believed that a better building might be erected in England at a less cost, probably by one-fourth. The gist of the report having previously appeared in the *Athenæum*, it came rather second-hand. On the 15th a paper was read by Mr. H. H. Russell on the "Construction of Suspension-bridges, with especial reference to a new mode of preventing Vibration."

ST. THOMAS'S CHURCH, NEWPORT.—We understand that there are about thirty sets of designs sent in for the re-building of St. Thomas's Church at Newport, Isle of Wight, which are on exhibition at the assembly-rooms there.

IRON.—A patent has been taken out at New York, by a Mr. M. S. Salter, for making hammered wrought-iron from the ore, by a single process, and within two hours! Can it be possible that we have here already an exemplification of the practicability of Mr. Mushet's heterodox prophecy against puddling? The cost of wrought-iron, it is said, will be less than half the usual cost, prepared on Mr. Salter's process. Anthracite is to be used under this patent.—Little business is doing in the iron trade. Prices were lately giving way, but appear to have since become a little firmer. It is declared, however, that "the minimum at which iron can be produced in Staffordshire has been already reached," and a withdrawal of capital is anticipated.

THE CHURCH AT SARAWAK, BORNEO.—The first beam of the first church (English) ever erected in this new dependency of the British empire was laid on 28th August last in presence of Sir James Brooke, the Rajah of Sarawak, and suite. The foundation sleeper was an enormously heavy block of iron-wood, which was slung into a trench by the Rajah. The work had then been for some time in progress, but there had been great difficulties to overcome in collecting, preparing, and carrying the heavy materials, and in levelling the hill for the site.

COLONNADES ARE "OUT."—The removal of the colonnade, forming the right-hand side of the outlet leading from High-street, Cheltenham, into the promenade, has been commenced, and in a few days the entire mass of building which rests upon it, and projects 10 or 12 feet into the street, will be brought down, and the houses thrown back to the Imperial-circus line of frontage. The colonnade was built thirty years ago, when such arrangements were in fashion.

THE READING ROOM AT DRURY-LANE. THEATRE appears to be a considerable attraction, especially to foreigners, who have few opportunities in London to see the papers of their respective countries. Many appear to go to the theatre solely for this feature. We were glad to find *THE BUILDER* in request there when we looked in: and that it was being pondered amidst the learned beauties of "The Prophet," and the clash of the "Row" Poets.

PROPOSED PROVIDENT INSTITUTION FOR OPERATIVES.—We are glad to find that this suggestion is germinating. Professor Cockerell has addressed a strong letter on the subject to "The Builders' Society," urging them to move immediately in the matter, and we have reason to believe it will receive the attention due to it, and that the builders will soon afford proofs of their heartiness in the service. We have some communications on the matter, to which we shall give early consideration.

ST. ALBAN'S ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—A meeting of this society was held on Wednesday in last week, at the Town Hall, St. Alban's. The attendance was numerous, and the Earl of Verulam, president, occupied the chair. The following papers were read—"On the Tapestry of Bayeux," by the Rev. T. Lee (honorary secretary); "On the Rise and Progress of the Art of Coining," by Mr. J. Evans; "On Verulam and the adjacent Antiquities," by Mr. R. G. Lowe.

THE BRISTOL AND WEST OF ENGLAND ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.—The report of this society, just now published, is illustrated by drawings of the south doorway, sedilia, &c., in the Holy Trinity Church, Westbury-on-Trym, and the proposed elevation of the Bristol High Cross, accompanying a paper on that subject. The doorway of Westbury Church was restored at the expense of the society.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, CORK, built from the design of Sir Thomas Deane, and illustrated by us some time ago, was opened on the 7th inst. The position of the building and its general effects are described as being admirable. We shall re-produce our view in the forthcoming number of "Buildings and Monuments."

TO DESTROY ANTS.—I have never known a solution of alum and potash in hot water to fail as a cure for ants in timber, but it must be applied boiling hot.—C. W. ORFORD.

* Readers of *THE BUILDER* may serve us by making known this work to friends who might not care to be subscribers to the journal, and yet would take "Buildings and Monuments," if they knew its scope and contents. It will be completed in eight parts, and will form, we venture to think, an interesting volume.